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PM: `Korban' can help Muslims care for less fortunate

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JITRA, Tues. - Understanding the true meaning of korban, or sacrifice, can help a tolerant Muslim society care for the less fortunate of all religions, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said this was because korban taught Muslims to empathise with the poverty, ignorance and suffering of the less fortunate.

"We hope that with this awareness, we can shape a Muslim society which is more sensitive to Muslims and non-Muslims who are less fortunate. When a society has these characteristics it will achieve happiness, because there will be a high level of tolerance and no greed, and no oppression of those who are weaker," he said.

Dr Mahathir, accompanied by Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, was speaking at a ceremony to distribute cattle donated by various companies and individuals at the Kedah Halal Food Hub (KHFH) complex in Paya Pahlawan here today. The ceremony was jointly organised by the Kubang Pasu Umno division and KHFH.

The cattle will be slaughtered on Hari Raya Aidiladha tomorrow and the meat distributed to Kubang Pasu residents.

The Prime Minister, who is Kubang Pasu MP, also reminded Muslims not to hold on to the mistaken belief that korban was a practice merely for the individual to obtain pahala or divine reward.

"Religious obligations are for us to strive to be better individuals and not to forget others in our society whose fate is not as good. Therefore we must remember that in society, although we are in power, we cannot do as we please; we must be tolerant."

The Prime Minister thanked the various donor companies and individuals and presented certificates of appreciation.

Among the companies involved were Syarikat Perumahan Negara Berhad, which donated 11 head of cattle; Celcom (M) Berhad (10); Air Asia Sdn Bhd (10); Aman Agropreneurs Sdn Bhd (10); KFC Holdings (M) Berhad (five); Permodalan Nasional Berhad (five); KUB (M) Berhad (three); PLUS Berhad (three); and Putrajaya Holdings Berhad (three).

Individual donors included Second Finance Minister Datuk Dr Jamaludin Jarjis, who donated two head of cattle; and Celcom (M) Berhad chairman Datuk Dr Mohd Munir Abdul Majid, who donated two.

Dr Mahathir also inspected the KHFH facilities and visited a nearby modern village housing project.

The Prime Minister later handed over one head of cattle to the imam of Masjid Kampung Kelubi Luar, Abu Bakar Nayan. The meat will be distributed to the 120 residents of the village tomorrow.

He then attended a similar ceremony at the Kampung Pulau Ketam mosque in Tunjang, where Dr Mahathir handed over one head of cattle to imam Yahya Lebai Mat.

Dr Mahathir and Dr Siti Hasmah then left for their personal residence in Titi Gajah, where the Prime Minister presented one head of selembu to a representative of Titi Gajah residents, Badarudin Ali.

Tomorrow, Dr Mahathir is expected to join the Sultan of Kedah for Aidiladha prayers at the Zahir Mosque in Alor Star before a scheduled audience with the Sultan at Istana Anak Bukit.

The Prime Minister and Dr Siti Hasmah will then attend a Hari Raya Aidiladha open house at Dewan Wawasan here. The open house, which Dr Mahathir is hosting in his capacity as MP for the constituency, will take

place from 10am to 3pm.

Dr Mahathir and Dr Siti Hasmah are expected to leave for Kuala Lumpur later in the evening.